

POLEMICAL ESSAYS.

BY

CHARLES BRADLEY

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GEORGE

PRINCE OF WALES,

WITH RECENT CONTRASTS AND COINCIDENCES.

BY

CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED AT 17, JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET ST., E.C.

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THE LIFE OF GEORGE PRINCE OF WALES,

WITH RECENT CONTRASTS AND COINCIDENCES.


“ ‘God save the King!’ It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving all the better: for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still.”—BYRON.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK PRINCE OF WALES, was born on August 12th, 1762. He was the son of George III. by the Queen Sophia Charlotte. George III. was thrice married, once privately in 1759, at Curzon Street Chapel, May Fair, to Hannah Lightfoot, a Quakeress, and afterwards on September 18th, 1761, publicly to the Princess Sophia Charlotte of Mecklenberg Strelitz. As Hannah Lightfoot was living at the time of the second marriage, the offspring of that bigamous union would have been illegitimate if George III. had not been King of England. Fortunately it is one of the maxims of our glorious constitution, that the King can do no wrong; besides which, the marriage with Hannah Lightfoot has been positively denied, although it is said that the Earl of Abercorn and Lord Harcourt, amongst others, informed Queen Charlotte of the actuality of the first marriage. I accept the denial, even in the teeth of the fact, for a royal denial, as was shown in the case of the Fitzherbert marriage, of the Duke of York scandal, and of the Mordaunt divorce, is of greater value than any evidence; and in this case I accept the denial of the Lightfoot marriage the more readily, as if the story of that union were true it would cast grave doubts on the right of Her Most Gracious Majesty to reign over us. The only title English monarchs have to their crowns—and it must be admitted that this title is an all-sufficient one—is that of hereditary right. The monarchs of some countries have been selected by their peoples: our kings and queens are bred from special foreign stocks, and inherit the right to reign just as other persons inherit entailed estates, and any blot on the legitimacy would weaken the right. It is some comfort to know that George III. married Queen Charlotte

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twice, the second marriage being solemnised at Kew, in 1765; but whether Hannah Lightfoot was then dead or alive is a matter on which it is difficult to express an opinion. At any rate, if there had ever been any doubt as to the legitimacy of George Prince of Wales, the second solemnisation of the marriage with Sophia Charlotte may give all loyal subjects more ease of mind as to the title of the later born members of the Royal Family. Those who argue that Hannah Lightfoot died in 1765, make strange suggestions as to a severe attack of mental disease, which, commencing at this time, although partially repressed, ultimately reappeared, and many years after terminated in the absolute idiocy of George III.

There is a great contrast between the parents of Prince George and those of the present Prince of Wales. The late Prince Consort is known as Albert the Good, and the statues erected through the country testify more strikingly than his many less known grand deeds, to the great esteem in which his memory is held by all loyal Englishmen; but George III. was described by Lord Brougham in the following fashion:—"Of a narrow understanding, which no culture had enlarged; of an obstinate disposition, which no education perhaps could have humanised; of strong feelings in ordinary things, and a resolute attachment to all his own opinions and predilections, George III. possessed much of the firmness of purpose which, being exhibited by men of contracted mind without any discrimination, and as pertinaciously when they are in the wrong as when they are in the right, lends to their characters an appearance of inflexible consistency, which is often mistaken for greatness of mind, and not seldom received as a substitute for honesty. In all that related to his kingly office he was the slave of deep-rooted selfishness; and no feeling of a kindly nature ever was allowed access to his bosom whenever his power was concerned." So one who had a fair opportunity of judging writes of the father, and the criticism may aid us to understand his son. It is said that on some rare occasions, George III. could be privately and munificently generous; the name of the father of our present Prince of Wales figured in many public lists of charitable subscriptions, but




it has never been suggested that he in any way concealed the natural liberality of his disposition. George IV. was by letters patent created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester ; as first born, he was Duke of Cornwall and of Rothesay, Earl of Carrick and Baron of Renfrew. The present Prince of Wales was also created Earl of Dublin, a title afterwards deserved by his praiseworthy exertions at Punchestown Races for the amelioration of the condition of the Irish people. When George Prince of Wales was only nineteen, he became with his brother Frederick, who was not only Duke of York, but was elected Bishop of Osnaburgh when eleven months old, the subject of much hostile comment. One writer says, "at this period the Prince and his eldest brother were associated in dissipation of every species : their love of gaming was proverbial, and their excess of indulgence in voluptuousness was sufficient to drain the resources of the country."

How great the contrast between the conduct of these two royal princes and that of the present Prince of Wales and his brother the Duke of Edinburgh. Omitting the Continental papers, some of which have dared to print suggestions as to the habits of the first, and the Colonial papers, some of which have been wicked enough to charge the second with open and notorious licentiousness, and leaving as unworthy notice Sir Charles Mordaunt's reference to "the previous bad character" of the present heir-apparent, we defy the finger of slander to touch in any of our respectable journals the slightest remark of a depreciatory character against either of our well-beloved royal princes ; except some provincial journal like the *Royal Leamington Chronicle*, or cheap paper like *Reynolds's*, all our free and independent press writers agreeing in testifying to the purity of the living scions of the House of Brunswick. George Prince of Wales called himself Florizel, and his *liaison* with Mary Robinson as Perdita was one of the most notorious amongst the escapades of his early life. Mrs. Baddeley states that it commenced when the Prince was little more than fourteen. "But," asks Thackeray, "shall we take the Leporello part, flourish a catalogue of the conquests of this royal Don Juan, and tell the names of the favourites to

whom one after the other Prince George flung his pocket-handkerchief? What purpose would it answer to say how Perdita was pursued, won, deserted, and by whom succeeded?" As Thackeray refrained with George, so we refrain with Albert Edward, and from Broadwood downwards draw a discreet veil of reticence which only hides from those who cannot see:—

“Who has a thing to bring
For a gift to our lord the King,
Our King all Kings above?
A young girl brought him love;
And he dowered her with shame,
With a sort of infamous fame,
And then with lonely years
Of penance and bitter tears.
Love is scarcely the thing
To bring as a gift for our King.”

The marriage of Prince George, in 1786, to Mrs. Fitzherbert, gained additional *éclat* from the fact that George is said to have written a letter to Charles James Fox, authorising him to deny in Parliament that the formal solemnity had ever taken place. Thackeray's answer ought to have been given to Mr. Rolle, in the House of Commons, in lieu of that spoken by C. J. Fox, who is alleged to have been present at the marriage, and yet asserted to the Legislature, if Hansard be reliable, that “it never did happen.” The author of “Vanity Fair” says that George “did actually marry Mrs. Fitzherbert according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church; that her marriage settlements have been seen in London, and that the names of the witnesses to her marriage are known.” Yet, of what avail is an author's word against the denial of a Prince? When George attained his majority he had an allowance of £50,000 per annum, together with a grant of £60,000 for furnishing Carlton House. When Albert Edward attained his majority he had £40,000 a year voted him by Parliament, he had the income of the Duchy of Cornwall, exceeding net £60,000 per annum, and he had the enormous accumulations of his minority, amounting to something like a million sterling. Neither George



Prince nor Albert Edward Prince limited his expenditure to the amount of his income. The debts of George came before the Parliament ; the pecuniary embarrassments of Albert Edward, although matter of common talk in some circles, are at present better concealed. The House of Commons in 1787, voted about £160,000 for the payment of the Prince of Wales's debts, solemn pledges of economy for the future being given by, and on behalf of, the royal insolvent. It is a question whether the present Parliament would vote, and whether the country would submit to a repetition of such a payment. In 1788, George III. was mad, and no greater proof can be advanced of the perfect and unimpeachable character of our monarchy than the fact that, with an insane head, the Government went on quite as well as when he was in possession of all his faculties. The mere fact that Jamaica had mutinied, that the American Colonies had broken our oppressive yoke, and that Ireland was held by force and fraud, must not be allowed to militate against our approval of George's reign. That war cost during it more than £1,200 000,000, renders the memory of George III. as dear to us, as the King was in life to the members of the London Corresponding Society. I know that one furious Radical, Earl Grey, speaks as if the monarchy were always better without the King than with him, for he declares that "the highly beneficial custom of holding Cabinet Councils without the presence of the Sovereign arose from George I. not knowing English." And Earl Grey had the audacity to publish this in the reign of her present Majesty, whose constant help and aid in the government of the nation is known to be so highly valuable. I once heard a public lecturer, describing the crowned head of this great empire, say—"What is the position which England's monarch occupies in the great vessel of the State? He is not the paddle-wheel nor the screw, neither the mast, the sails, the rigging, the bulwarks, nor the keel ; he is the highly decorated figure-head, always costly, not always handsome, and never useful."

In consequence of the state of mind of George III., debates took place in the House of Commons as to the Regency. The friends of the Prince claimed it for him as

a right ; Pitt, on the contrary, maintained the terribly revolutionary doctrine, that in the event of incapacity on the part of the reigning monarch, the right to nominate the Regent rested with the Parliament. Everyone will see that this is a most dangerous doctrine, for it is equivalent to declaring that the nation has the legal right to select its own ruler on any vacancy occurring in the occupancy of the throne. Fortunately, the King temporarily recovered his reason. When sane, George III. bitterly disliked his eldest son, and showed that dislike in various fashions—the King and heir apparent were seldom or never seen together. To-day no such division can be shown between the reigning monarch and Crown Prince ; and although it is true that on the recent royal visit to the City the Prince of Wales was unavoidably absent, it must not be forgotten that immediately his royal mother had left London for Windsor, Albert Edward delighted all loyal citizens by his attendance the same evening at one of the new theatres. George Prince of Wales was called the first gentleman in Europe ; that is, he was so styled while he was alive, although posthumous critics have disputed his claim to the title ; no such dispute is, however, likely to arise in any case with reference to the present Prince of Wales. His royal thoughtfulness for his guests, the sons of the Viceroy of Egypt, when a careless coachman had overturned them in the mud, will remain an ineffaceable testimony of his sensitive and well-trained nature. George is said to have been praised, and not unduly, for his highly cultivated mind, his elegant accomplishments, and his personal graces. Albert Edward has been honoured in the cartoon of the *Tomahawk* with a pictorial epitome of *his* elegant accomplishments.

In 1788, 1789, and 1790, in order to raise money, George Prince of Wales, Frederick Duke of York, and William Henry Duke of Clarence, issued joint and several bonds, bearing interest, and payable within six months after either of them should ascend the throne. These bonds were issued to an extent in all of nearly one million sterling nominal, but were of course placed at heavy discount. The holders, who were mostly foreigners, were prevented from being importunate creditors by deportation under the Alien Act

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from this country, and by accusations of treason in their own land. In 1794, the Prince of Wales owing then about £650,000, a bargain was made that George should marry his cousin Princess Caroline Louisa of Brunswick, and that the nation should not only pay all his debts, but also increase his annual allowance. George wanted his debts paid, but did not want to marry, and the copy of a letter is preserved, from him to his proposed spouse, in which he asks her to refuse to marry him, tells her that he loves another woman, and finally winds up: "You would find in me a husband who places all his affections upon another. If this secret which I name to you in confidence does not cause you to reject me; if ambition, or any other motive of which I am ignorant, cause you to condescend to the arrangements of my family, learn that, as soon as you shall have given an heir to the throne, I will abandon you, never to meet you more in public." It is wonderful how any woman could have married a man writing her such a letter. George said, "You cannot accuse me of having deceived you." Not only were the £650,000 debts paid, and the Prince's allowance increased from £60,000 to £100,000 per annum, but £71,000 additional was voted for plate, jewels, and marriage sundries, at Carlton House. Six months after the marriage the starving poor cried, "Give us bread," "No famine." King George III. was pelted on his way to open Parliament, and, when he arrived at Westminster, was so frightened "that," says a Parliamentary writer, "his face was flushed and swollen, his eyes were momentarily turned from side to side, and his manner evinced the utmost perturbation." In great fear the Treason and Sedition Acts were hurried through Parliament.

It is alleged that George asked for a glass of brandy after his first interview with his bride elect, and that when he was married, on April 8th, 1795, he did not even remain sober on the wedding-day. No such disgraceful charge could be repeated against Albert Edward, whose constant sobriety, at home and abroad, might serve as an example for loyal temperance lecturers. That *La Cigale* should pretend against our prince, habits more like those of his princely predecessor, is an illustration of the licence of the foreign

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press, and that rumour should suggest an instance of public insobriety on the Boulevard des Italiens, shows how far mud may be thrown at royal ermine of the most spotless purity. Thackeray speaks of how George "reeled into chapel to be married; how he hiccupped out his vows of fidelity."

A daughter was born to Prince George on January 7th, 1796. She was named Charlotte Augusta, and immediately after her birth, Prince George, as he threatened, separated himself from his wife.

In 1803, the excesses of Prince George caused him further embarrassment, and £60,000 a-year extra were for three years and a half devoted to the liquidation of his liabilities. Who dare write at length the names of the women—some titled and fashionable—who helped to spend this money? In the Duke of Buckingham's letters, vague references at a later date to one titled dame might be explained in regard to the expenditure of this period:—

"Who has a thing to bring
For a gift to our lord the King?
A harlot brought him her flesh,
Her lusts, and the manifold mesh
Of her wiles interwolved with caprice;
And he gave her his realm to fleece,
To corrupt, to ruin, and gave
Himself for her toy and her slave.
Harlotry's just the thing
To bring as a gift for our king."

The Marchioness of Conyngham, one of the many temporary wives of this modern Solomon, amongst other gifts, had jewels value £80,000. Lady Jersey, another favourite, shared in the work of spoiling the Egyptians. Thackeray says, that the Prince of Wales' turf experiences were unlucky as well as discreditable. He was accused of cheating with his horse Escape, and although of course acquitted, left the Jockey Club in consequence. The Prince living separate from the Princess of Wales, all kinds of rumours were circulated, one allegation being that since the living apart, another and illegitimate child had been born to her, and a Royal Commission, including the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Jus-

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tice of England, was issued to investigate these slanderous allegations; the official report made is supposed to have thoroughly cleared Princess Caroline's character, and to have demonstrated the most wicked conduct on the part of Queen Sophia Charlotte and Prince George, but King George III. "directed it should be destroyed, and every trace of the proceedings on the affair buried in oblivion." William Cobbett, however, obtained a copy of all the depositions, either from the Princess of Wales, or from Mr. Perceval, and printed them in a special number of his *Political Register*. In a letter printed some time after her acquittal, the Princess of Wales describes the evidence offered against her before the Royal Commissioners, as "the perjuries of my suborned traducers." In 1809, another royal scandal rang through Europe. His Royal Highness the Duke of York was Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's forces, and it was proved before Parliament, by one of his many repudiated mistresses, a Mrs. Mary Ann Clark, that several sums of money had been paid to that lady by officers desirous of procuring promotion. One sum received by Mrs. Clark was shown, by corroborative testimony, to have been applied in part payment of a jeweller's bill, for which the Duke of York was liable. A note was produced which several witnesses, some of them of most unassailable character, declared to be in the Duke's handwriting, and the contents of which referred to the case. The Duke, however, declared the note to be a forgery, and the House of Commons, by a large majority, acquitted him of any participation in the scandalous corruption which undoubtedly took place.

The Duke of York declared, on "the honour of a Prince," that he knew nothing of the corruption proved at the bar of the House. One member of the House of Commons, Mr. Tierney, replied that "It was easy to conceive that His Royal Highness would have been prompt to declare his innocence upon a vital point; but why declare it upon 'the honour of a Prince?' for the thing had no meaning." Mr. Lyttleton, another member of the Parliamentary Committee, said, "If it were in the power of the House to send down to posterity the character of the Duke of York unsullied—if their proceedings did not extend beyond their journals, he should

almost be inclined to concur in the vote of acquittal, even in opposition to his sense of duty. But though the House should acquit his Royal Highness, the proofs would still remain, and public opinion would be guided by them, and not by the decision of the House. It was in the power of the House to save its own character, but not that of the Commander-in-Chief." Mr. Wilberforce demanded the Duke of York's removal from office as "a reparation to the wounded morality of the country." Lord Temple urged that "His Royal Highness cannot be prudently continued a servant of the public." "Wherever he went the deep murmurs of public indignation would strike his ear." Lord Milton said, "His Royal Highness had given in a letter in which he declared on the honour of a Prince that he was innocent," "to his other guilt his Royal Highness had added that of falsehood." Fortunately for lovers of monarchy, a majority of 364 members against 123 brought in, in effect, a verdict of not guilty, and although the Duke of York resigned his high office, his character was freed from all stain. Now, his Royal Highness George William Frederick Charles Guelph Duke of Cambridge, son of the seventh son of George III., happens to be the present Commander-in-Chief. The nation pays to H.R.H. £12,000 per annum, as a slight mark of gratitude for having been born of Royal blood. It pays him also £4,432 for being Field Marshal Commander-in-Chief, and permits him also to receive another £5,000 a year for performing the task—so distasteful to his honourable nature—of holding four sinecure colonelcies. He has the full character of Brunswick bravery and—inheriting courage from his princely father, whose gallant conduct in leaving his command in Hanover, in 1803, covered his name with glory—has gathered enough of laurels in the Crimea to keep his reputation as a warrior green for ever. Of course, in the pure hands of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, all suspicion of anything like improper influences in the administration of army patronage is out of the question, and any repetition of the Duke of York scandal simply impossible. Nevertheless, the *Belfast News Letter*, in a paragraph which went round the press about twelve months since, said—

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"The whisper of a grave scandal has become so loud in circles where reliable information is generally to be found, that it is no longer possible to leave it unnoticed. It relates to a very high personage, whose position ought to place him high above the breath of suspicion, but whose private life is sullied by excesses which threaten to bring disgrace upon the order to which he belongs, and even to sully the ermine of Royalty itself. Had the causes of complaint or of reprobation been confined to private history alone, the probability is that the veil might not have been raised; but it is asserted that a flagrant abuse of patronage has long prevailed in the department over which the person in question holds imperial sway, and that the storm of dissatisfaction is attaining a strength which will probably lead the House of Commons, in the interests of the public, to direct an inquiry into the circumstances of the case. The subject is one of extreme delicacy, but, in a reforming age like the present, if suspicion justly attaches, it would seem but right that those who are responsible for the honour of the administration, whether it be military, naval, or civil, should interfere, ere it be too late, to prevent a great scandal, if not national reproach. It is rumoured that certain facts in connection with the matter have been laid before the chief adviser of the Crown."

His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, ought to regret that neither Colonel Wardle, nor Lord Folkestone, nor Sir Francis Burdett is now in the House of Commons, to move for a parliamentary inquiry into the foundation of the above scandalous statement, for there can be no doubt that the Duke would be thoroughly cleared from all imputation, despite the allegation of the *Queen's Messenger*, that "his department is such an Augean stable of corruption, that it can never be cleansed unless the Serpentine is made to flow through it." Just as His Royal Highness the Duke of York was cleared by the vote of the House of Commons, and as His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was freed from suspicion by the recent decision in the Mordaunt case, so would the Duke of Cambridge emerge unsullied from the ordeal of a parliamentary inquiry into the present distribution of army patronage. It is no light question; the money value of the preferment distributed in the department over which the Duke presides has already exceeded £2,000,000 sterling, and the central administration of the English army costs nearly three times as much as that of the French,

whose forces are at least five times as numerous. In 1810, a tragedy took place in connection with the Royal Family of an almost unparalleled character. His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus Guelph Duke of Cumberland, fifth son of George III.—whom Daniel O'Connell described as “the mighty great liar,” and of whom another said that “sensibility and virtue were strangers to his breast”—was wounded in his own room on the night of the 31st May. The wounds are said to have been inflicted by the Duke's valet, Sellis, who was found dead in bed. Sir Everard Home, the physician, says that Sellis clearly killed himself; another account says that Sellis's “head was nearly severed from the body.” An inquest was held on Sellis, but the jury not being permitted to see the body, refused to give any verdict, and a second jury was got together who returned a verdict of *felo de se* against Sellis. While it is not possible now to say one word which can clear this mystery, it must not be forgotten as an illustration of the general virtues popularly attributed to the Royal Family, that it was repeatedly alleged that Sellis did not commit suicide; that no evidence was offered showing that he had any reasons for destroying himself, nor was it proved that he had shown any disposition towards such a course. On the contrary, it was urged that “the motive for getting rid of Sellis was the Duke's fear lest the man should reveal a secret inculcating his royal master in a crime of the most horrible description.” While there is no reason for even supposing Sellis to have been murdered, it must be admitted that the Duke of Cumberland was extremely unfortunate in the matter of suicides. Twenty years later, Lord Graves committed suicide at a time when his existence interfered with the Duke's intimacy with Lady Graves, and Englishmen may rejoice that, bad as are some of the living Royal Princes, there is not one amongst them whose career can be regarded as coincident with that of the Duke of Cumberland.

In 1811, Prince George was appointed Regent, £100,000 extra being voted to him to enable him to bear the cost of the assumption of regal authority, and public opinion may be not unfairly judged by the following extract from a letter printed by the famous Junius, reproaching him for non-

performance of his duties as ruler, and contrasting the Prince Regent with his father, the poor mad King :—

“It is true we had gained little by the private virtues of a sovereign, since they had neither benefited his people nor taught his children morality; but if not publicly useful, they were a barrier to reproach. He did not stain the throne with vice, nor drown the clamours of the people in the midnight revel. Content himself to walk soberly through his part, he left the busy action of the scene to others, but never shrunk his share in the performance. We did not call him from the stew to the Council-board; from the bed of adultery to the seat of honour. Sir, it is said you plume yourself upon that princely qualification called honour, but is it in the abandonment of every sacred tie or moral obligation? Is it in the open disregard of the world’s reproof, and the stoical indifference to the calls of nature and humanity? Is it honour which prompts you to quit the arms of a wife for the endearments of a wanton; or with unblushing effrontery to introduce that wanton before the chaste eye of your Royal Mother? Is it a proof of princely honour to toy away the night in debauchery, the day in lascivious enjoyment, and bid the business of the world stand still? While your country groans in distress, and your people are sinking under their privations, is it a sense of princely honour which bids you revel in profusion, and mock their sorrows with your ostentatious prodigality? It is said you have so far outstripped the boundaries of enjoyment, that luxury and sensuality toil after you in vain; would you be redeemed from a state so calamitously despicable, go visit the abode of your wretched subjects, and take a lesson from patient indigence.” “If this afford not an antidote to the listless apathy of your disposition, deign but to hearken to the grievances and wrongs which overwhelm your people, and the sense of apprehension must woo you back to reason.”

No Junius lives to-day with fiery pen to scorch the princely vices of another George.

On May 3, 1816, Princess Charlotte of Wales was married to Prince Leopold, of Saxe Coburg. Prince Leopold had been previously married on January 2, 1815, to the Countess of Cohaky, who was alive at the time of the marriage with Princess Charlotte of Wales. That this was another instance of bigamy is an addition to our story so trifling that we pass it by without further comment. The Princess of Wales died in child-bed on the 6th November, 1817; Prince George never communicated the death to her mother, “the most

brutal omission," says Mr. Wynn, in his letter to the Duke of Buckingham, "I ever remember, and one which would attach disgrace in private life."

On the 23rd January, 1820, the Duke of Kent died. On the evening of Friday, the 28th January, 1820, died officially King George III.

"He died!—his death made no great stir on earth,
His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet gilding, brass, and no great dearth
Of aught but tears.
The new world shook him off; the old yet groans
Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones
To all his vices, without what begot
Compassion for him—his tame virtues."

For some time the old King had been blind, deaf, and incurably mad, and yet his Grace of Buckingham and Sir William Knighton, tell us that the news of his death was received by George IV. "with a burst of grief which was very affecting." Living, the son had hated the father; for ten years that father had suffered chronic lunacy, but his good son finds affectionate grief for the dead as recompense for lack of filial love for the living.

In the succeeding month came the Thistlewood conspiracy, chiefly promoted, if not originally concocted, by an infamous scoundrel in the employ of the Castlereagh Government, who used the weaknesses of foolish and desperate men in order to terrify the timid by fear of treason and outrage from pursuing real political reform. Some coincidences quite as fearful, and even more thoroughly the result of police fabrication, might be found in Ireland and England in the present reign. Trials for sedition abounded. Henry Hunt, Sir Francis Burdett, Sir Charles Wolseley, Mr. Joseph Harrison, were all convicted and sentenced during the months of March and April. Colonel McMahon, who had been pimp and pander-general to the vicious appetite of George Prince of Wales, having died, and his private papers having passed into the hands of Mr. William Knighton, a physician, discreet reticence made Sir William Knighton the confidential adviser of the now worn-out and irritable debauchee. Next came the trial of the Queen, before the

House of Lords, for alleged adultery with Bartollomeo Bergami, of which Thackeray says, "As I read her trial in history I vote she is not guilty. I don't say it is an impartial verdict; but as one reads her story, the heart bleeds for the kindly, generous, outraged creature. If wrong there be, let it be at his door who wickedly thrust her from it." In August, 1820, one of Fremantle's letters to the Duke of Buckingham speaks of the treason, sedition, and blasphemy permeating the press, and a few weeks later Lord Cassilis writes, arguing against any reduction of the army, "a soldier less, and we shall have revolution and civil war." In July, 1821, King George IV. was crowned, his Queen, Caroline, whose name had been previously erased from the Liturgy, being refused admittance even to the Coronation ceremony. It was with George as Prince, not George as King that we desired here to deal. Some other time we may take the ten years of his reign from Coronation to death, and try to wade through the intrigues at the Cottage, the influence of Lady —, &c., of which the Buckingham letters say so much and tell so little. It is too much to try to sketch, in a few words, a concluding portrait of the rapidly-corrupting mass of foulness which seldom sat on the throne, or did kingly duty, but which Englishmen prayed for every Sunday, and honoured in their National Anthem,

"God save our gracious King."

"Here," says Thackeray, "was one who never resisted any temptation; never had a desire, but he coddled it and pampered it; if he ever had any nerve, frittered it away among cooks, and tailors, and barbers, and furniture-mongers, and opera dancers," "all fiddling, and flowers, and feasting, and flattery, and folly," "a monstrous image of pride, vanity, and weakness." From the accession of George III. in 1760, to the death of George IV., in 1830, the Royal Family of England received from the national treasury no less than £92,090,807.